

Trans-Lake Washington Project EIS

Methodology Report – 6/10/02

Environmental Justice

This analysis will identify whether the Trans-Lake Washington Project could result in potentially disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and/or low-income populations.

Guiding Plans and Policies

- Presidential Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (EO 12898), dated February 11, 1994.
- U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Order on Environmental Justice (DOT Order 5610.2), dated April 15, 1997.
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (FHWA Order 6640.23), dated December 2, 1998.
- WSDOT Environmental Procedures Manual, Section 458, July 2001.

Data Needs and Sources

- The environmental justice analysis will be based primarily on a review of the scope and effect of the Project impacts, as reported in the EIS sections prepared for the Trans-Lake Washington Project. The effect of mitigation measures may also be considered. Consequently, portions of this analysis cannot begin until other project team members have completed an identification of impacts and mitigation specific to their disciplines.
- 2000 U.S. Census data at the Block level for race and at the Block Group level for income will be used in the analysis. (The race data are already available. The income data are scheduled to be released by the Bureau of the Census in April 2002.)

Proposed Coordination with Agencies

- Periodic communication will occur with FHWA and FTA throughout the course of the study.

Proposed Coordination with Team, WSDOT, and Sound Transit

- Periodic communication will occur with Don McCollough at WSDOT OSC and Legal/Environmental Compliance at Sound Transit.
- Close coordination will be required with the leaders of environmental analyses in which potentially high and adverse effects are identified. The results of all environmental

analyses prepared for the Trans-Lake Washington Project will be reviewed; however, particular attention will be placed on the following elements: Relocations , Transportation, Air Quality, Noise and Vibration, Visual Quality, and Social.

- The WSDOT and Sound Transit project managers and the Core Management Team will be kept abreast of findings.

Study Area

The environmental justice analysis is essentially a review of a review (i.e., the results of other National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews are further reviewed and analyzed). Consequently, the study area for environmental justice will correspond to that of the particular environmental element being reviewed.

Affected Environment Methodology

The affected environment discussion will identify and describe the locations of minority and low-income populations in the vicinity of the SR 520 corridor . Maps depicting the locations of these populations within ¼ mile from the SR 520 right-of-way will be produced using the GIS.

Environmental Consequences Analysis Methodology

The environmental consequences analysis will review the scope of potentially high and adverse effects using the discipline reports and EIS sections prepared for the Trans-Lake Washington Project, and taking into account the demographics of the impacted areas, as appropriate. The results of all environmental analyses prepared for the Trans-Lake Washington Project will be reviewed; however, particular attention will be placed on the following elements: Relocations, Transportation, Air Quality, Noise and Vibration, Visual Quality, and Social. A qualitative assessment will be made of each alternative's likelihood to cause potentially high and adverse effects that could fall disproportionately on minority and/or low-income populations.

Assumptions

- Procedures to provide meaningful opportunities for public involvement of minority and low-income populations are an important component of environmental justice and will be conducted as part of the Public Involvement for the Trans-Lake Washington Project. It is assumed that a written summary of these outreach activities will be prepared by the public involvement team for inclusion in the final environmental justice report.
- In this analysis, any discussion of project benefits that may offset potentially disproportionate impacts will be taken directly from the Trans-Lake Washington Project's purpose and need statement. This analysis does not include any development or quantification of specific project benefits. If deemed necessary, others will develop and quantify the project benefits.
- It is assumed that the Environmental Justice analysis will be documented in an appendix to the Trans-Lake Washington Project EIS. Environmental Justice in itself is not an element of the environment in the strict NEPA context. As discussed above, the Environmental Justice analysis is essentially a review of a review (i.e., the results of the

NEPA EIS review will be further reviewed and analyzed). Keeping this documentation separate will allow it to follow a format that is more appropriate for its inherent “review of a review” nature, instead of attempting to force-fit it into the standard NEPA review outline. The intent of this separation will be to increase overall comprehension and accessibility to the reader.

Mitigation Measure Methodology

Mitigation measures may be taken into account in determining whether disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low-income populations could result. The mitigation discussion will, as appropriate, identify project mitigation measures and describe how they would reduce project impacts. The analysis may also suggest, after consultation with relevant agencies, measures to minimize identified impacts that could result in disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and low-income populations.

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